

DEFEND WORKERS' RIGHTS Stop deportations!

On May Day, demand solidarity and legalization

By Teresa Gutierrez

More than 1 million immigrants have been deported since President Barack Obama took office. One million! This is a tsunami of injustice.

This mass deportation of immigrants takes place amid a wave of anti-immigrant legislation sweeping the country. Many such bills have already been passed by state legislatures, most recently in Georgia. Many more are pending, as in Florida, making this the ultimate hour of "show me your papers" in the U.S.

But whatever the stage of the bills, the legislation has already achieved its goal of contributing to a racist, anti-immigrant climate. This witch-hunt is calculated to instill fear in immigrant communities, driving workers to go further underground or to self-deport, and to prevent immigrants from organizing for their rights.

Furthermore, the anti-immigrant climate is meant to break solidarity between workers born in this country and workers born elsewhere.

These attacks come in the context of the deepening economic crisis. What is the solution of the corporate bosses and their representatives in government to the crisis they created? It is to attack teachers, steal workers' pensions, increase layoffs and foreclosures, and sabotage unions, including the fundamental right to collective bargaining.

To carry out this program, the bosses must foster divisions among the working class. The capitalist system counts on social peace as it dismantles workers' rights to a job, health care, education and so on. Only solidarity and a fighting spirit can push their program back.

May Day 2011 is more important than ever. May Day was born as a day of righteous struggle, of revolutionary militancy, and that spirit must be revived again in the U.S.

Solidarity. A united, militant fightback. These are the only things that will stop the deportations as well as all the attacks against workers and the oppressed. Only by reviving the class struggle can

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Mumia death sentence ruled 'unconstitutional'

BULLETIN, April 26 —

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has unanimously ruled that Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence is unconstitutional. The court reaffirmed its 2008 finding that Abu-Jamal's sentencing jury was misled about the process for considering evidence supporting a life sentence. WW will have more coverage on the ruling next week. □



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U Wisconsin-Milwaukee students continue occupation of school to protest budget cuts. Workers are mobilizing for May Day. Article, page 6.

WW PHOTO

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WW EDITORIAL STATEMENT

No troops, no bombs,
U.S.-NATO out!

Four months ago it was hard to foresee that a rebellious movement in Egypt would have a direct impact on the struggle of workers in the United States. Yet workers and students who occupied the Capitol in Madison, Wis., were inspired by the struggles in Tahrir Square. Activists in Egypt went online and bought pizzas for those sitting in at Wisconsin’s Capitol.

The rebellion against the status quo had started in Tunisia, then spread quickly to Egypt and throughout the region. In Tunisia and Egypt, the rulers had worked hand in glove with the U.S., Britain, France and other NATO powers. So this mass movement threatened the domination of the imperialist ruling class — the same class of multi-billionaires that is coming down ever more savagely on the workers here at home.

What have these exploiters done in response to the peoples’ movements? They have developed a strategy to maintain and even extend their domination of the region.

In Egypt and Tunisia — and perhaps now in Yemen — when they can no longer keep the favored ruler in power, the imperialists work to keep the system intact, changing only the faces on top. In Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, however, they are still defending the old rulers, no matter if they are absolute monarchs or a quasi-military dictatorship. In Palestine they support Israel’s long-term campaign to crush a popular liberation movement.

Their tactic toward Libya and Syria is different. The U.S. and the other NATO powers see an opportunity to oust governments they never liked and replace them with ones that are more compliant, that will open the entire country to foreign rule and plunder.

So the Pentagon, the CIA and other U.S. agencies that serve the super-rich are now launching bombs and rockets at Libya. It has become yet another country under siege by imperialism in the energy-rich region of North Africa and Southwestern Asia.

For workers to succeed in defending our rights here at home, we have to understand what is going on there. This is no easy task. Each country has its own recent history, its own ruling groups. Some were colonized by Britain, France or Italy but won a measure of independence during the period of national liberation struggles. Some are states whose rulers stay in power because they serve U.S. banks and corporations and get Pentagon weapons in return.

On top of the complexities in the region, there is a torrent of misinformation in the corporate media and from politicians. These are the same forces we have already learned to mistrust based on what they say about our own struggles, from New York to Wisconsin to California.

U.S. foreign policy is easier to understand, however, when you consider that it comes from the same elite social grouping that is pushing the attack on workers’ rights and livelihoods here in the U.S. Behind all the politicians and their compliant media stands the capitalist ruling class with its enormously powerful corporations and banks. This is also true in Europe, where the rulers are carrying out the same anti-worker policies as here.

Whether they’re demanding austerity from the workers at home or using military force to topple governments that defy them, the motive is the same: profits, the lifeblood of capitalism.

At one time the existence of the Soviet Union acted as a deterrent to the global ambitions of the rich and super-rich. Now those who command the powerful states and military machines of the Pentagon and other NATO countries are quicker to go on the offensive. They feel freer to cut down whatever was won by workers at home. And they feel freer to unleash their troops and bombers to re-conquer and loot those countries and peoples who managed to win liberation from colonial rule when the socialist camp existed.

We need to start with this truth: The U.S./NATO intervention in this energy-rich region of the world has nothing to do with the character of the individual rulers or the individual governments of the states there.

The failure of the capitalist system to produce stable growth is what is driving the rich ruling class to foreign adventures. The demonization of an individual ruler, whether it be in Libya or Syria, for example, is merely a pretext for invasion and conquest, as happened in Iraq.

The politicians and media here want to convince us that our taxes should be spent on “regime change” through acts of war. They want to send our youth to kill and die there. So they demonize first and then attack.

The money it costs for each bomb, each missile of the thousands launched at the people there could be used to hire scores of teachers or nurses here. The arms dealers, the oil corporations and the banks share the plunder, but the workers here and the people being bombed are forced to pay the costs.

For the people of that region and for the workers in the U.S. and Western Europe, there is absolutely no reason to support any intervention by the exploiting powers. Our role should be to fight against intervention, especially military intervention, in any of these countries. That is the only way to show solidarity with the legitimate people’s struggles there and at the same time to fight for the interests of the workers here.

No arms, no bombs, no rockets, no advisers, no troops! U.S., Britain, France, NATO, out of Africa and Western Asia! □



Hold the date!
BE THERE!
 Wall Street — May 12th
“The Day We Made Wall Street Stand Still”

A coalition of unions and community groups, from the United Federation of Teachers to 1199/SEIU to Coalition for the Homeless, is gearing up for a mighty worker response to the budget cuts on Thursday, May 12. Wall Street has the money. Tired of jobs and services

being cut to the bone? Join thousands of workers in creative actions to let the bosses and bankers know: No justice, no business! Follow workers.org for more details.

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‘Wisconsin on the docks’

Labor defends longshore union from employer attacks

By Dave Welsh
San Francisco

Several hundred defenders and members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 in Oakland took over the plaza at Pacific Maritime Association headquarters here on April 25 to demand that the employers’ group drop its lawsuit against the union. The suit was in retaliation for the dockworkers’ solidarity action on April 4 in defense of Wisconsin public workers.

The militant lunchtime rally praised the voluntary rank-and-file action by Local 10 members on April 4. The action resulted in no ships being loaded or unloaded for 24 hours in the San Francisco and Oakland ports.

“This was Wisconsin on the docks,” said ILWU member Clarence Thomas. He pointed out that the rank and file were answering the AFL-CIO’s call for “No Business as Usual” during the April 4 nationwide day of action to defend besieged public workers in Wisconsin and 15 other states — who are threatened with losing their pensions, union work rules, collective bargaining rights and social services.

“This was a courageous act of conscience on the part of these dockworkers — whose work, by the way, is critical to the functioning of the global economy. Remember that Oakland is the fourth-busiest container port in the country,” said Thomas.

The mass protest at PMA was seen as a “shot across the bow” launching a national defense campaign, supported by the San Francisco Labor Council, to defend and assert the right of ILWU members and all workers to take job actions or withhold their labor in solidarity with the struggles of other workers.

Jack Heyman, another Local 10 dockworker, said the 1934 West Coast Maritime Strike led by Harry Bridges and the San Francisco General Strike that followed it “are what made San Francisco a union town. Now we’re in another crisis of capitalism. This time the government workers are in the forefront of the struggle.

“It’s a class struggle, and we’re facing bipartisan attacks,” continued Heyman. “The difference between the two parties is that the Republicans want to take away collective bargaining and the Democrats want to keep collective bargaining as long as we accept unacceptable concessions.”

Trent Willis, Local 10 dockworker and former president, said the April 4 actions took place on the anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination. He told how Dr. King was made an honorary member of Local 10 and addressed the membership in September 1967 while in San Francisco organizing for a Poor People’s March on Washington.

Monadel Herzallah of the Arab American Union Members Council recalled the powerful moment last June 20 when 800 to 1,000 people massed at a terminal in the port of Oakland at 5:30 in the morning to prevent the loading or unloading of an Israeli Zim Lines ship. This was to protest the murderous Israeli attack on a Turkish ship bringing aid to besieged Palestinians in Gaza. ILWU Local 10 honored the picket line and the terminal was idle for 24 hours.

“You can’t begin to imagine the impact that action had,” said Herzallah. “There are homes in Gaza where pictures of that 5:30 a.m. picket line in Oakland are taped to the wall. I have no doubt that the people’s uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt and the union movements that played such an important role there were inspired by the ILWU refusal to cross the line and work the Israeli ship.

“But solidarity is not a one-way street,” Herzallah concluded. “Now Local 10 is under attack for taking a selfless action in solidarity with Wisconsin workers, and they need the active support of every union, every community group, every one of us.”

Cephus Johnson, uncle of Oscar Grant, who was shot dead by transit police on New Year’s Day in 2009, referred to the fact that Dr. King was in Memphis to support the campaign to win a union contract for sanitation workers: “For change to occur, labor and community, we all must unite.”



PHOTO: RANDALL WHITE

Local 10 members applaud as Dave Welsh reads letters of solidarity.

Two ILWU ship clerks from Seattle, Michael Hoard and Gabriel Prawl, flew to San Francisco to be part of the rally. Prawl said he was “inspired by Local 10. There is an attack coming down on working people, an attack by big business and the bosses on Wall Street. Local 10 is the one union that stands with organized labor and also with the unemployed.”

Solidarity from Wisconsin, Greece, Brazil, the Carolinas

Solidarity messages have rolled in from around the world. From Madison, Wis., the South Central Federation of Labor said, “Whether it’s racist apartheid in South Africa, imperialist war in Iraq, or fascist plutocracy in Wisconsin, Local 10, shows us ‘what a Union should look like!’”

The World Federation of Trade Unions, based in Athens, Greece, with 80 million affiliated members, wrote, “Your refusal to work on April 4 is a real example of class-oriented trade unionism in action. The right to strike is fundamental to all workers. Especially now, as the crisis of the capitalist system deepens and workers find themselves under increasingly sharp attacks, this basic right needs to be protected and extended.”

Brazil’s CGTB labor federation wrote to “condemn the attitude of the PMA and the U.S. government to crack down on workers’ rights to unionize, to demonstrate, to fight for their rights.”

A resolution from United Electrical Workers, Eastern Region said of the 24-hour Oakland port shutdown: “Such bold,

militant rank-and-file worker job actions are similar to that taken by UE Local 1110 members in Chicago to occupy and save the Republic Windows and Doors factory in 2008.”

The UE pointed out that anti-labor laws like the Taft-Hartley Act can be resisted, as the ILWU did successfully after the coastwide shutdown of West Coast ports on May Day 2008 to denounce the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Meanwhile, employers and state governments have also used Taft-Hartley to deny collective bargaining to public workers in the South, “yet public workers in North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia boldly organize under the UE banner.”

Ken Riley, president of the Charleston, S.C., Longshore local, wrote ILWU Local 10 that “Your valiant stand on the Wisconsin issue has once again set the bar for Labor’s response. Unfortunately, the rest of Labor just hasn’t got it yet. Labor should have issued a national strike to address the Wisconsin issue.”

In mid-April, many labor, community and social justice activists, including ILWU rank-and-filers and the SF Labor Council, came together to form the Committee to Defend ILWU Local 10, which can be reached at defendlocal10@sonic.net. You can sign up online to send a letter to the CEO of PMA or download a petition at www.bailoutpeople.org/ilwu.

Send donations, with “Defend ILWU” on the memo line, to the committee c/o SF Labor Council, 1188 Franklin, San Francisco, CA 94109. □

ALL OUT FOR MAY DAY & MAY 3!

By Cheryl LaBash

The increased attacks on both immigrant and non-immigrant workers show the need for the most united, militant action possible on May Day. What became International Workers’ Day originated in the U.S. out of the struggle of immigrants and other workers who in 1886 fought and died for the eight-hour workday and the right of all workers to a decent life.

In 2005 May Day was revived in the U.S. with a march in New York City organized by the Million Worker March Movement. In 2006, as repression of immigrants reached a fever pitch, May Day exploded. Millions poured into the streets throughout the U.S. on May 1 to demand legalization and rights for all workers. United mass action defeated the racist Sensenbrenner bill. In Los Angeles the “Day Without Immigrants” called for no work, no school, no shopping, no selling. Profits dropped at shuttered businesses.

This year May Day is the next nationwide step to push back the union-busting attacks launched in Wisconsin against our jobs, communities and even democratic voting rights. In a welcome devel-

opment, the organized labor movement is mobilizing and uniting with the immigrant movement in many areas.

MAY DAY — New York City *May 1st where? Union Square!*

Gather at 12 noon at Union Square
14th St. & Broadway, Manhattan
March to Foley Square for closing Unity Rally

Welcome Clarence Thomas, co-chair of the Million Worker March Movement and member of ILWU Local 10 (which closed the San Francisco and Oakland, Calif., ports on April 4) and Gilbert Johnson, President AFSCME Local 82 from Milwaukee, Wis.
• Stop the attacks on working families, organized & unorganized, & all working people around the globe • Jobs, education, housing, union rights & a living wage for all • Money for human needs, not for war
• Legalize the undocumented
• Stop the deportations

For New York see May1.info, 212-633-6646.

MAY DAY — Tucson, Ariz.

Resist! Stop the attacks on (im)migrants, our youth and all workers!
• Stop attacks on ethnic studies & public education • Stop attacks on (im)migrant communities • Stop attacks on public workers — NO union busting • Stop collaboration

between the local & the federal police
• Stop militarization of border & the deaths
• Stop the deportations

Gather: Greyhound Park (SE corner of 4th Ave and 36th St) 9 a.m.; march to 11:30 a.m. rally at Armory Park (SE corner of 6th Ave & 13th St)
Tucson May 1st Coalition — tucsonmay1st.org

MAY DAY — Los Angeles

Gather 10 a.m. at Olympic & Broadway
Sponsor: So. California Immigration Coalition
Contact: call 323-602-3480 or 213-712-0370 or email contact@immigrationcoalition.org
• Full legalization for all now • Stop ICE deportations now • No guest worker (aka bracero) program • Workers’ right to organize
• Stop 287(g) and “secure communities”

MAY DAY — Milwaukee, Wis. Solidarity March for Immigrant and Worker Rights

1:30 p.m.: Assemble at Voces de la Frontera 5th St. & Washington 2 p.m.: March to Veterans’ Park 3 p.m.: Rally featuring AFL-CIO Int’l Pres. Richard Trumka & Voces de la Frontera Executive Director Christine Neumann-Ortiz
• Stop racist Arizona copycat law
• Defend in-state tuition for immigrant students
• Defend collective bargaining rights
• Stop Walker’s budget cuts to education & health care

MAY DAY — San Francisco

Gather at 24th & Mission, 11:30 a.m.
March at noon to 1 p.m. rally at Civic Center
The San Francisco Labor Council endorses “A day without workers” and supports the right of affiliates to engage in work stoppages, sick-outs, and any other solidarity actions on May Day. A nine-day march from San Francisco to the state Capitol will step off after the rally. It will join the Teachers’ Union tent city for public education on May 9 in Sacramento, Calif.

• One world, one movement: immigrant rights are workers’ rights
• Stop the attack on all working families and working people around the globe

MAY 3 — Raleigh, N.C.

Defend Education & All Public Services

The North Carolina Association of Educators is organizing a massive rally at the North Carolina General Assembly against deep budget cuts proposed by the legislature. Buses are being organized from across the state. Many organizations and coalitions working to defend the public sector — unions, students and community groups — will be out in force.

3 p.m.: Student and Youth Rally for Education and Public Services, N.C. State University Bell Tower

4 p.m.: One Voice Rally at N.C. General Assembly, 16 W. Jones St.
Contact: Raleigh@fistyouth.org, call 919-604-8167, or visit www.onevoicerrally.com.

Boycott planned if Ga. gov signs anti-immigrant bill

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Nine days after the Georgia Legislature passed HB 87, an Arizona copycat law that authorizes local and state police to require proof of citizenship or legal residency from anyone suspected of being undocumented, the governor still had not signed it into law.

This bill says that people who don't provide sufficient papers will be arrested and turned over to federal agents. The law requires all businesses with more than 10 employees to run the identity of new hires through the E-Verify system, a government database that has been plagued with errors. Additionally, in certain circumstances, persons transporting or harboring undocumented immigrants can also be arrested and face considerable fines and jail time.

Gov. Nathan Deal has said several times that he intends to sign the measure into law. He has until late May to either veto, sign or do nothing. However, only a veto will prevent it from becoming law on May 24.

Grassroots opposition to this and other anti-immigrant bills generated a number of press conferences, mass lobbying days, a weekday rally of more than 8,000 in

front of the Capitol here, solidarity protests around the state, the delivery of tens of thousands of petitions, a flood of phone calls, and a candlelight vigil the last night of the Legislature's session, when with its backers using underhanded tactics, the bill was passed on April 14.

The Atlanta City Council has endorsed a resolution calling on the governor to veto the bill. Similarly, other local governments, elected officials, major businesses and multinational corporations, convention and tourist associations, the Catholic Archbishop of Atlanta, other religious leaders, lawyers, agricultural groups, restaurant owners and landscapers, among others, have issued public statements or had meetings with the governor detailing their opposition to the measure. They all cite the economic, political and public relations damage that will be caused by a promised boycott and legal action that would follow HB 87's implementation.

Immigrant, civil rights and civil liberties, student, labor, social justice, faith-based and other groups have intensified their demand on the governor to veto the bill, charging that it legalizes racial profiling and is unconstitutional. While there is fear and uncertainty among the many immigrant groups that call Georgia home,

there is an undeniable spirit of resistance. Undocumented students in Atlanta faced arrest on April 7 to show that they were no longer willing to live in the shadows but were determined to fight openly for their human rights. Many workers and their families have declared "We are here — and we are not leaving!"

The petition and phone call campaign to the governor continues. A more than 55-mile Pilgrimage for Immigrants took place during Easter week and garnered a great deal of press. A major rally will take place on May 1 in front of the Capitol.

The beginning stages of a boycott of Georgia conventions, tourism and entertainment are already in progress. National organizations that took the lead in developing the successful boycott of Arizona last year are engaged in the launch of the Georgia campaign. Labor organizations and lesbian, gay, bi and transgender groups are prominent.

Some estimates of Arizona's economic losses range as high as \$150 million in one year. Georgia's high-profile tourism and convention business expects to be even more vulnerable to charges of racism and xenophobia.

For more information, go to www.somosgeorgia.org. □

ON THE PICKET LINE
By Sue Davis

BP rig workers honored

As part of the April 28 commemoration of Workers Memorial Day — the day chosen to honor workers killed on the job and to call for tougher job safety laws — labor unionists will salute the 11 workers who were killed in the BP Deepwater/Horizon drilling platform explosion a year ago on April 20, which triggered the worst environmental and economic disaster ever in the Gulf of Mexico.

According to the most recent data available, in 2009 some 4,340 workers were killed on the job and another 560,000 died of occupational diseases. In addition more than 4.1 million workplace injuries and illnesses were reported in both private and public workplaces. It's estimated that since the Occupational Safety and Health Act went into effect 40 years ago, an estimated 430,000 lives have been saved. But much more needs to be done to address new hazards, set the highest standards for worker safety and establish tougher enforcement, so that the health of all workers is protected at work. (afl-cio blog, April 20)

Suits defend immigrant workers

Farms in Washington state and Hawaii as well as California-based labor contractor Global Horizons Inc. are being sued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for discrimination against more than 200 Thai immigrant workers. (New York Times, April 21) Global Horizons confiscated the workers' passports and threatened to deport them if they complained about conditions. Named in the suit were eight farms, including Del Monte Fresh Produce. The Times called this "the largest human trafficking case in the nation's agriculture industry." The EEOC also filed a lawsuit in Mississippi against marine services company Signal International, claiming that 500 immigrant Indian workers faced discrimination and substandard living conditions in Texas and Mississippi. These immigrant workers, lured to the New Orleans area to join the cleanup after the 2005 hurricanes, have been struggling for justice since 2006.

Continued on next page

Defend workers' rights Stop deportations!

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we not only defend past gains but win new victories.

Washington, not local laws, behind deportations

Behind the 1 million deportations is a federal policy initiated by the Obama administration in 2008 called "Secure Communities."

Writing a series of articles in Counterpunch last summer and fall, Stewart J. Lawrence commented that Obama's Secure Communities may be more dangerous than the laws emanating from Arizona.

A half-year later the facts show this to be true.

Secure Communities was sold to the public as a program that would deport alleged criminals without documents.

The fact is that a million workers have been deported, many of them under the Secure Communities policy. This demonstrates that this program is meant to round up the undocumented under any pretext, demanding papers to prove their official immigration status and then consigning those without papers to the deportation process.

Legal experts, human rights and immigration activists have all denounced this as extreme racial profiling. Only people of color are stopped and asked for their papers.

Chicago activists point to the case of an immigrant who was stopped because a cop alleged that the Virgin Mary hanging on a string in his car blocked the driver's vision. (Medill News Service, Northwestern University)

The 1 million people who have been deported are not criminals. They are workers — workers who were forced to come to this country because of U.S.-orchestrated economic and political policies, such as NAFTA and the kidnapping of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti.

Often, what police use to justify stopping workers are things people are doing simply to survive. For example, a woman in New

York was stopped, and ultimately deported, for selling CDs, allegedly illegally.

However, even that small group of workers who might have committed a serious anti-social act must be defended. Otherwise, the movement would be going along with ruling-class attempts to divide "good" and "bad" workers, while the real criminals drop bombs in Libya or foreclose on homes.

The movement cannot go along with this divide-and-conquer attitude of the ruling class that wants the movement to take sides and agree to deport "those bad immigrants but not these."

Lawrence pointed out that Secure Communities targets "low-level misdemeanor offenders, including people who may be guilty of little more than running a stop sign or driving with a broken taillight." Many of these people are innocent. "But," wrote Lawrence, "they are getting rounded up and processed for deportation just the same."

The program began in North Carolina and Texas in October 2008. Now, about 500 jurisdictions in at least 25 states are working with the Department of Homeland Security to implement the program. Lawrence noted that is more than six times the number of jurisdictions working under the earlier immigration legislation, Section 287(g), which authorizes local police to act as Customs agents.

To add insult to injury, the Department of Homeland Security originally told state government officials that they could opt out of Secure Communities. This turned out not to be true.

In mid-April, Rep. Zoe Lofgren of California called for an investigation of federal immigration officials who she said lied about whether states or counties had the right to opt out of Secure Communities. Opponents of the program say this deception probably prevented officials who do not want to go along with the program from filing lawsuits in time to prevent the collaboration.

According to a commentary by Bill King in the Feb. 16 Houston Chronicle, it costs about \$23,500 per person to deport a worker. Imagine if that money were used for human needs instead of repression.

Jobs, legalization and health care for all would result in real secure communities.

Obama meets on immigration

On April 19 President Obama met with several elected officials as well as community and labor leaders. Participants included New York billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg as well as AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and the Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network. The meeting was about reviving the national discussion on "comprehensive immigration reform."

The specific call for CIR has been dropped by many immigrant advocates, because much of the legislation in and out of Congress called CIR would actually do the opposite of what the progressive movement is demanding.

That's why the right-wing, anti-immigrant forces have also called for CIR. Their CIR often includes guest worker programs and compulsory biometric identification systems that would hurt all workers. These bills grant legalization to almost no workers.

What much of the pro-immigrant movement continues to demand is immediate and genuine legalization for all. And it will not stop until legalization is won.

This wing of the movement condemns any and all guest worker programs and considers them a slap in the face not only to foreign-born workers, who are brought here with little or no rights, many in slave-like and abusive conditions, but to unions as well. Guest workers have been used in the past to break union campaigns.

AFL-CIO's Trumka will be speaking at a May Day rally in Milwaukee organized by Voces de la Frontera and others. This is an important gesture of solidarity.

Trumka will be representing immi-

grants, especially the undocumented. In any further discussions with President Obama he must make sure that legalization is front and center.

Furthermore, a moratorium on deportations is long overdue.

The 2011 May Day rallies around the country must send a clear message of independent struggle.

May Day rallies must say to all those involved in the debate on immigration — to the bosses who want to place the burden of the economic crisis on workers' backs; to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents who conduct vicious, racist raids in immigrant communities; to all the right-wingers who are blaming the budget deficit on workers and their unions: Stop the war on the working class!

Wisconsin showed the way. Now we must take it further.

Only an end to all the attacks on workers will suffice — whether they are teachers or students, dishwashers or nurses, autoworkers or miners.

Until this war ends, we must not only continue to march and demonstrate but revive the militant spirit of the Haymarket struggle for the eight-hour day, from which May Day was born. □

In the least-unionized state

Teachers, students unite to protest budget cuts

By Ben Carroll
Raleigh, N.C.

After suffering years of deep budget cuts that have wiped nearly \$10 billion from the public sector and facing even more devastating cuts this year, workers and students from across North Carolina have set May 3 for a showdown over the budget.

The North Carolina Association of Educators, the teachers’ union with more than 60,000 members statewide, put out the call for a rally for public education at the state General Assembly when it meets in Raleigh on May 3. The call was quickly and enthusiastically picked up across the state. Many different organizations and coalitions that have been organizing to defend the public sector are planning to mobilize their members to be there as well. Organizers from the NCAE are projecting that between 5,000 and 10,000 people will attend.

Students and young people are also making a big push to mobilize for the May 3 demonstration, to stand in solidarity with the teachers and public workers, and

fight back against the cuts. The NC Defend Education Coalition, a broad statewide education justice coalition, has been heading up the student organizing efforts. Representatives from the coalition have met with the Association of Student Governments of the University of North Carolina system, which gave general support for the action, and have been in discussion with many other organizations across the state.

“We are really excited for the demonstration on May 3 and have been working with a number of organizations from across the state to turn out students and young people,” said Bryan Perlmutter, a student at N.C. State University and an organizer with the coalition. “We have heard from high school students, university students from nearly every UNC system school and as far away as Pembroke, Boone and Asheville. They are all coming on May 3. We recognize that now is the time we must take a united stand to stop these cuts to education and all public services.”

The coalition is organizing a “Student and Youth Rally for Education and All Public Services” that will gather at the

N.C. State Bell Tower at 3 p.m. to march through downtown and join the main rally at the Legislature at 4 p.m.

NCAE posters advertising the demonstration list the time for the rally as “4 p.m. until.” There has been much discussion about various actions that may take place that day, with the fighting examples of workers and students in Wisconsin, New York, Ohio, Tennessee and elsewhere in the forefront of people’s minds.

The demonstration could not come at a more appropriate time. The N.C. House will be in session that evening in order to approve their draconian budget by the following day. Dominated by right-wing and Tea Party forces, the House budget cuts more than \$1 billion from education, slashes more than 15,000 state workers’ jobs, and includes deep cuts in or actually eliminates many vital social services. This is coupled with proposals to privatize many services that the state now provides, eliminate the cap on charter schools in the state and lower N.C.’s corporate tax rate from 6.9 percent to 4.9 percent — the third lowest in the country.

Ana Maria Reichenbach, a student at

UNC Chapel Hill and an organizer with Chapel Hill Students for a Democratic Society, is outraged. “All these corporations are making record profits, banks are sitting on trillions of dollars, and the U.S. is dropping bombs on Libya, yet we are told that there is no money for education, jobs or other things that people need,” she noted. “Now is the time that students and young people, workers and everyone from the community need to stand together to fight back against these cuts they are proposing and demand that they tax the rich and corporations.”

May 3 will be an important step forward in the movement to fight back against these austerity measures and budget cuts. It carries added significance in the U.S. South because North Carolina is the least unionized state in the country and one of only two states that make it explicitly illegal for public workers to collectively bargain, through a Jim Crow-era law, GS 95-98.

It is exactly this kind of collective, determined and bold action by workers and students that is needed in this period to push back these attacks on the public sector and build a fighting movement to win. □

Students arrested defending workers’ rights

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Bulletin: On the night of April 25-26 Emory University police raided the tent city that Students and Workers in Solidarity had set up to focus attention on the abuse of cafeteria workers by the Sodexo Corp. The cops tore down their banners and knocked over their tents. According to Emory graduate student Andrea Nicholls, the students were told by a school official to vacate the area in two minutes. There had been no previous communication or warning about their use of the Quad area. Seven people were arrested, including Nicholls. The three women and four men were released from the Dekalb County jail on bail at 11 a.m. on April 26.

Calls can be made to Emory President James Wagner’s office at 404-727-6013 to condemn the arrests and support students’ and workers’ rights.

April 25 — On the emerald green expanse of lawn known as the Quad at Emory University, in front of the administration building, a circle of small tents decorated with banners and signs declares support for campus workers. Members of Students and Workers in Solidarity (SWS) have maintained this encampment around the clock since April 20.

Boeing found to be anti-union

The National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint against Boeing on April 20, seeking to force the airplane company not to relocate production to a nonunion plant in South Carolina, but to use its unionized facilities in Washington state. The complaint said the move “was motivated by an unlawful desire to retaliate against union workers for their past strikes in Washington and to discourage future strikes.” (New York Times, April 21) The move “angered business groups and some politicians, who said it was an unwarranted attempt by the government to interfere with a fundamental corporate decision.” (New York Times, April 23) Stay tuned. □

That day a protest was called to bring attention to the violations of food service workers’ rights by the giant multinational Sodexo. It started with a rally featuring student activists like sophomore Alex Zavell, who laid out the conditions the workers face: low-pay, unaffordable health insurance, arbitrary and discriminatory treatment, and anti-union harassment. The workforce is mostly female and African-American.

Zavell traced step-by-step SWS’s efforts over more than a year and a half to engage the Emory administration to take action to address these issues. The university holds itself out as an institution dedicated to ethical behavior and promotion of human rights.

However, President James Wagner has repeatedly replied to charges of poverty wages and unfair working conditions that this was a matter between Sodexo and its employees. SWS has called out this hypocritical stance, since the university was fully aware when it signed a contract with highly profitable Sodexo that the subcontracted wages and benefits would be minimal.

The students are pressing for the contract to be terminated and for the university to establish a labor code of conduct that would guarantee all those who work at Emory, whether direct or subcontracted, certain rights and wages.

The April 20 rally was also addressed by Isaac Farris Jr., nephew of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Representing the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Farris offered the support of the respected civil rights organization and made clear the importance Dr. King placed on the right of workers to organize for a living wage and respect on the job.

Another speaker cheered by the crowd was State Sen. Vincent Fort, a long-time progressive activist whose battles on behalf of poor and working people are well-known.

Students stage occupation before encampment

Following the rally, students, Emory alumni and supporters crowded into the fourth-floor hallway of the administration building, seeking a meeting with President Wagner. Told he was away from



Students at Emory University hit Sodexo Corp’s poverty wages. PHOTO: KICKOUTSODEXO.USAS.ORG

campus for the day, students occupied the area right outside his office door.

University Vice President Gary Hauk, spotting a woman in her sixties, asked who she was. Perhaps he thought she was an “outside agitator”? But Emory alumna Ann Mauney treated Hauk to the long, sordid history of Emory’s treatment of campus workers, particularly the food service employees.

Mauney recounted for all in the hallway to hear that when she came to Emory as a freshman in 1967, students were campaigning to alleviate the minimum wages and racist treatment suffered by cafeteria workers, who were direct employees of the university at that time. She chastised Emory for persisting in maintaining a culture of poverty for service workers at one of the wealthiest universities in the country. Hauk turned and walked away.

For the next several hours, students maintained their vigil, past the closing of the building. Eventually school administrators called the police, who arrived in bullet-proof vests, in multiple squad cars and accompanied by a “paddy” wagon. The students continued to resist and delayed their departure from the building for more than another hour.

Upon leaving the administration building late Wednesday night, they set up tents, strung their banners over the building’s main entrance and began their Workers’ Solidarity encampment.

The administration building has been on lockdown ever since, with police at all the doors, and entrance allowed only with Emory identification and a confirmed appointment. Even visiting parents with

perspective students have not been able to get into the building.

For five days now, with the number of tents growing to include locations for food, information and a study area, SWS has engaged thousands of students, faculty and staff about the issues raised by Sodexo’s multi-million-dollar contract with Emory and its exploitative treatment of the workers, almost all of whom are people of color. The student newspaper, the Emory Wheel, has covered the protest and encampment extensively.

The Quad will be the scene of Emory’s graduation ceremony on May 9. Students are preparing to oppose efforts to dismantle their camp. They are already planning to raise the campaign at graduation when Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano is the commencement speaker.

Students at other schools are similarly engaged in militant actions in support of campus workers. For example, also on April 20, students at William and Mary College in Virginia occupied the president’s office, demanding a living wage for the housekeeping staff. The private college had five students arrested when they refused to leave.

On April 21 students at Tulane University in New Orleans conducted a sit-in, demanding “Kick out Sodexo” from their campus.

On April 11, students at Northeastern University stopped their school from contracting with Sodexo because of its documented human rights abuses toward workers around the world.

For more information, go to www.usas.org. □

Capitalism at an impasse

The era of jobless recovery & crisis of the profit system

By Fred Goldstein

The capitalist system in the U.S. and worldwide is deeply mired in a new phase: the era of the jobless recovery and long-term mass unemployment. This phase is the inevitable result of the profit system.

The capitalists are recovering from the crisis of 2007-2009, but the working class is not. Mass unemployment remains high, despite the increase in profits for the bosses and the growth of capitalist production and services.

Right now in the U.S. more than 17 percent of the workforce, or 24.5 million workers, are officially unemployed or underemployed — that is, they either have no jobs or are forced to work part time when they need full-time jobs. The real number is probably closer to 30 million because of the undercount of those who have dropped out of the workforce altogether.

The \$10 trillion in government bailouts to the banks and auto companies plus the stimulus package kept the system from total collapse. But the recovery of economic growth is going at a snail's pace, and millions of unemployed have little hope of being rehired. Every week hundreds of thousands of workers file new claims for unemployment.

Furthermore, while the few new jobs created are mostly in the lowest-paying service industries, the bosses are also hir-

The capitalists are recovering from the crisis of 2007-2009, but the working class is not. Mass unemployment remains high, despite the increase in profits. Union solidarity is getting stronger. Labor-student-community unity is growing. The new current of activism and resistance is pushing back against ruling-class reaction. These two trends are on a collision course: a recipe for a rise in the class struggle against capitalism.

ing workers on a temporary basis. Workers are becoming “disposable” under a new system of “just-in-time” hiring.

The era of the jobless recovery began in 1991. Workers continued to be laid off for almost two years after the capitalist economy recovered. In the next jobless recovery of 2001-2004, it took four years for unemployment to come down to pre-recession levels. During the recent crisis 8.5 million workers lost their jobs in less than two years. The so-called recovery has been touted for two years now, but it has not made a dent in mass unemployment.

What is behind this growing crisis for the workers and the system?

Marx on technology & unemployment

In the struggle to maximize profits, the capitalist class has relied on new technology that drives workers to produce more and more in less and less time at lower and lower wages. Every capitalist is compelled to use this technology as a matter of survival. It is a law of capitalism. This creates a huge contradiction which gets worse and worse as capital grows.

In the book “Low-Wage Capitalism”

published in 2008, this author wrote:

“Under the capitalist system, no matter how wide the scope of its operation, production is driven forward by leaps and bounds under the impact of competition for profits. The bosses look for new, more productive technology and economies of scale to cut their labor costs, and this leads to ever-expanding production, which outpaces the slow development of the consumer power of society.”

This trend leads to fewer and larger monopolies bringing in more and more technology. This in turn leads to growing mass unemployment or, as Karl Marx put it, an inevitably increasing “reserve army of the unemployed.” Explaining this process in Vol. I of “Capital,” Marx called it “the law of capitalist accumulation.” He showed how the capitalists used unemployment to depress wages. He also showed how technology destroys skilled, high-paying jobs and creates more and more low-skilled, low-paying jobs.

This law makes it harder and harder for capitalism to grow at a rate fast enough to keep mass unemployment from steadily rising.

But Marx also showed that this law would lead to a rebellion against and organization and resistance to exploitation. The working class will eventually be the “grave diggers of capitalism.”

The U.S. is surely a long way from revolution at the present moment. But there is a new current of resistance bubbling beneath the surface. Thousands of workers and students seized the state Capitol in Wisconsin and held it for two weeks, seeking to block a union-busting law directed against public workers.

Union solidarity is getting stronger. Labor-student-community unity is growing. The new current of activism and resistance is pushing back against ruling-class reaction. These two trends are on a collision course. These are the ingredients for a rise in and a widening of the class struggle against capitalism.

Goldstein is author of the book “Low-Wage Capitalism: A Marxist Analysis of Globalization and Its Effects on the U.S. Working Class.” He has also written numerous articles and spoken on the present economic crisis. For further information visit www.lowwagecapitalism.com.

Wisconsin continues to be cauldron of struggle

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee

Protest activities continue across Wisconsin to fight the union-busting bill signed by Gov. Scott Walker on March 11. They are also directed at the many anti-people measures contained in the budget proposal for the next two fiscal years, 2011-2013, which would cut at least \$3.6 billion from services that help poor and working people.

Because of the massive people's resistance, an injunction is still in place that prevents the bill signed by Walker on March 11 from being implemented and becoming law. The bill is also before the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

The people's struggle against union busting and other anti-people attacks is also giving mobilizing strength to the now annual May Day march and rally in Milwaukee, sponsored by the immigrant rights organization Voces de la Frontera. Thus far the Wisconsin AFL-CIO; American Federation of Teachers Local 212; the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in Wisconsin; the Painters and Allied Trades Local 781; Service Employees Local 1; and other unions are supporting and mobilizing for this event.

The demands for the mobilization include full legalization for immigrants, no to union busting, keep in-state tuition for immigrant students, oppose budget cuts and oppose any and all racist copycat Arizona-type legislation that targets immigrants in Wisconsin. (www.vdlf.org)

The final tally in the April 5 election for the Wisconsin Supreme Court — which was widely considered a referendum on Walker's anti-union measures — was released on April 15. It showed the conservative David Prosser winning by 7,316 votes over independent JoAnne Kloppenberg. But on April 20 Joanne Klopp-

penberg decided to request a statewide recount. Until a full recount is done, the Government Accountability Board can't certify the results.

The election is marred by controversy due to a conservative clerk in Waukesha County “finding,” on the day after the election, thousands of ballots for Prosser, which made him the winner. The clerk, Kathy Nickolaus, is a former Prosser employee and has previously been investigated for voter fraud.

“An honest and open recount is the only way that the voters of Wisconsin can have confidence in the results of the 2011 Supreme Court election,” said Phil Neuenfeldt, president of the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO on April 20. “A manual recount will only add to the integrity of the electoral process and provide reassurance to the unprecedented amount of voters who came out on April 5 to make their voices heard.” (<http://wisafclcio.typepad.com/>)

Across the state, poor and working people from Madison, Milwaukee and beyond continue to engage in a wide range of protest activities, including recall campaigns, targeting banks and corporations through various means, protesting anti-people politicians wherever they turn up, protesting on “Tax Day” by demanding that the rich pay taxes, packing budget hearing meetings and more. International solidarity in many forms — such as the action of members of the International Longshore Workers Union Local 10 shutting down the docks in San Francisco and Oakland April 4 — is ongoing as well.

U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee occupation continues

Aaron Luther is a member of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a participant in an occupation at this university which began its eighth week on April 25. The occupation began at

the Theatre Department, which is facing virtual elimination under Walker's 2011-2013 budget proposal. Students are now occupying space in the Student Union.

“We are here to get the message out to the students and the faculty that what Scott Walker wants to do to the university as far as privatization will raise our tuition and we can't afford that,” says Luther. “We are also here to get information out about what Walker wants to do to the city of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin in general. We demand that UW-Milwaukee maintain a public status as a university, and that tuition and fees be frozen so that tuition no longer goes up. We're going to use this space as long as we feel it's necessary. We're constantly rethinking, re-planning and reorganizing.”

Added Luther: “Getting support from the unions has been really big for us. We've gotten quite a bit of incredibly positive responses. The unions take care of all the maintenance and all the cleaning. If it wasn't for them, the university wouldn't run. We wouldn't be able to keep it looking as good as it does. And the Teaching Assistants union [members] are giving us their support and we've gotten support from other groups on campus such as SDS and Act Everywhere.

“During the school day we leaflet and talk to people. When we have free time, we've gone out to protests. Several of us have gone to Madison. We protested at Walmart the last two Sundays because Walmart gave money to Scott Walker's campaign, and Walmart has a bad workers' rights record. We are also setting up more protests for other companies that happen to be on the boycott list or are grossly anti-union,” concluded Luther.

Statements of solidarity can be sent to uwmoccupied@yahoo.com. Supporters are welcome to visit anytime. Donations of food and supplies, which are always needed, can be dropped off at the occu-

pied space in the student union, or people can email to work out arrangements.

‘We’ll be victorious!’

Gilbert Johnson, president of AFSCME Local 82 at UW-Milwaukee and also a member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and the A. Philip Randolph Institute, has been and is a principal organizer of the people's resistance in Wisconsin. He is mobilizing for a May 21 town hall meeting in Milwaukee. Johnson will be a featured speaker at this year's May Day rally in New York City.

On May 21, the ninth annual African-American Labor and Community Summit will take place at the Laborers' Local 113 union hall, 6310 Appleton Ave. in Milwaukee. This year's town hall meeting is sponsored by the CBTU and the A. Philip Randolph Institute. Its theme is “Get up, stand up for your rights.” This event is free and open to the public and runs from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. For more information, call 414-771-9828 or 414-412-5219 or email jayafclcio@sbcglobal.net or rightreign@gmail.com.

Says Johnson: “We're settling in for many battles and we're confident that we'll be victorious. Truly an injustice done to one is an injustice to all. This is a world people's struggle. The Wisconsin struggle is no strange occurrence as we watch people in Egypt, Iraq and all over the world striving for freedom. Thanks to all the people who have a worldview who are able to bring that view home to us that we not be so disillusioned and lost. We do have leadership that can hook us into the worldview and also give us a strategy that will take us on to victory against capitalist greed, war and those who would destroy our way of life.”

To help and for more information, visit www.wisafclcio.org; wisafclcio.typepad.com; www.vdlf.org; www.defendwisconsin.org; and www.bailoutpeople.org. □

What slogans to advance the workers' struggle?

By David Sole

Every great struggle has a rallying cry.

The French Revolution of 1789 saw the masses storming the Bastille for “Liberty, Fraternity, Equality.” The workers and peasants in the Russian Revolution of 1917 called for “Bread, Peace and Land.”

What will be the stated goal for the emerging mass struggle in the United States?

What can union leaders across this country be thinking when they advance the slogan “Defend the Middle Class”? This slogan isn’t just coming from one or two confused individuals. It has been promoted by AFL-CIO International President Richard Trumka, United Auto Workers President Bob King, and countless state and local union leaders.

Of course, these union officials should be commended for finally calling mass protests against the vicious union-busting, wage- and benefit-cutting onslaught, especially against public workers. Workers have been eagerly responding by the thousands and tens of thousands — in Wisconsin by the hundreds of thousands — to the numerous marches and rallies as they see their right to bargain collectively destroyed, their wages slashed and their pensions threatened. A long-delayed mass fightback seems to be taking shape.

But raising the banner “Defend the Middle Class” at the front of this movement is not only an inaccurate description. It is also harmful to the very struggle they are trying to promote. The Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary describes the middle class as “occupying a position between the upper class and the lower class ... composed principally of business and professional people, bureaucrats, and some farmers and skilled workers.”

While most workers may not have consulted Merriam-Webster, they know they are part of the working (disparagingly

called “lower”) class.

It is true that some union leaders, like UAW’s Bob King, explain that they support workers “in having and maintaining a decent middle-class standard of living.” (Solidarity, March/April 2011) But in the next paragraph he confuses a decent standard of living with the “need to rebuild the Great American Middle Class.”

Why can’t these union leaders come out and say they are defending the working class and the right of all human beings to a decent standard of living?

Following World War II, the labor unions and their leadership in the U.S. were shaped by two powerful forces. First, the capitalist ruling class of bankers and corporate bosses, along with their bought-and-paid-for politicians, opened up a political attack to drive most socialists and communists out of the unions — unions they had often founded.

Second, the pre-eminent economic and military position of the United States worldwide led that same ruling class to distribute a few crumbs to a section of the U.S. working class. From around 1947 to 1972 the average standard of living rose 50 percent. For those workers who benefited from this rise, class struggle concepts seemed unnecessary.

Talk of the “working class” and the “capitalist class” disappeared from their vocabulary. Workers were now called “employees” or “associates.” Some theoreticians advanced the idea that this ideology was dead, such as Daniel Bell in his 1960 book “The End of Ideology.”

Relearning the class struggle

The current ruling-class offensive against the workers and the unions catches most union leaders untrained in class struggle action. Even where they may sincerely want to put up a fight, and are gathering their troops to do battle, they

are hampered by misconceptions. Perhaps they fear that the ruling class will attack them for fomenting “class struggle.” Maybe they also fear that their own members might not respond to a call to build a fighting, mass, working-class-led struggle.

Certainly there was a time when many better-paid, unionized industrial workers looked down upon those below them on the economic ladder. But today those same workers have been laid off by the hundreds of thousands. Plant closings and outsourcing overseas have decimated the once-powerful industrial unions.

Many workers have accepted savage wage/benefit cuts, while newly hired autoworkers are being paid half the wages of older autoworkers in a system called “two tier.” Teachers and public workers in many fields are seeing firsthand that they have no job security or rights respected by the ruling class.

Now is precisely the time when clear and correct slogans are needed to rally and educate the millions of workers entering into the struggle.

We can’t go back to the time when only a small percent of the workers enjoyed a “middle-class standard of living.” It isn’t only that. The ruling class won’t allow it.

More importantly, that reactionary vision leaves out the vast majority of other workers who have no unions.

It leaves out the unemployed and underemployed, who now number 30 million people.

It leaves out the millions of undocumented and persecuted workers.

It leaves out the disabled and homeless, the victims of racism, sexism and anti-lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer oppression.

All of them are part of the vast working class of the United States. All of them are also looking for a decent standard of living. Calls to defend or rebuild the “middle class” can only serve to alienate and insult

the majority of the working class, exclude them from the struggle and weaken the ability of our class to fight back and win.

Time to revive working-class slogans

The fact that this so obviously erroneous slogan was quickly taken up across the country by most prominent union leaders makes one think that it emerged from internal discussion that included some think-tank “specialists.”

The close relationship of the unions to the Democratic Party and the unions’ long-time, overriding dependence on electoral rather than mass struggle make it reasonable to assume that the union leaders are using this slogan to really appeal to — not their own members — but the actual middle class.

Since a large part of the workers, the unemployed and the poorest people of the country don’t vote most of the time, and a significant part of the middle class has come under Tea Party/Republican influence, union leaders may think they can woo them to a progressive position with this slogan for the next election.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with the working class and its organizations putting forth slogans to support middle-class groupings that are suffering from the economic attack by the banks and corporations. But only a powerful working-class struggle that unites all parts of the working class for jobs, health care, housing, education, decent wages and pensions — only this kind of fighting force — can and will draw behind it a growing section of the middle class.

It is time to revive working-class consciousness and a working-class struggle in the streets. For that we need working-class slogans.

Sole, a member of the United Auto Workers for the past 40 years, is past-president of UAW Local 2334, Detroit.

Haters drowned out on Boston Common

By Steve Gillis
Boston

Shock-troops for right-wing big business who call themselves the Tea Party held an April 15 “tax day” rally on Boston Common. They hoped to showcase their well-paid, rabid, local talk-show mouthpieces, Wisconsin’s former Republican governor, and also their support for a Democratic Party-sponsored bill in Massachusetts that would take away unions’ collective bargaining rights for health care and other benefits.

Rally organizers also passionately promoted tax cuts for the rich and spewed racist fury toward the Obama administration, while extolling a Jim Crow campaign to require picture identification at the polls. One of their presidential wannabes, the union-busting, social-service-slashing ex-governor of Minnesota, Tim Pawlenty, was the featured speaker.

But they got outflanked by the Women’s Fightback Network, Steelworkers Local 8751, and dozens of allies from the anti-war and social justice movements. These anti-fascist forces had gathered a block away at the crowded Park Street subway station, where they held a public speak-out against the racism, anti-union hostility, sexism and bigotry directed at lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people by the Tea Party, which is sponsored by the super-rich Koch brothers.

Just as the bigots’ rally was to begin, the anti-racists hoisted their banners and signs and silently marched into enemy territory.



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

Don't mess with these workers, Tea Party!

The “tea partiers” looked stunned as they turned, lowered their hateful signs, split down the middle to make a path, and watched the counter-demonstration take over the front of their stage.

As the haters’ first speaker ran to the microphone, the opposing forces pulled out their own megaphones and launched into spirited chants of “Racist, sexist, anti-gay! Tea Party bigots, go away!” and “Union yes! Tea Party no!”

The bigots — numbering only a few hundred, compared to last year’s 5,000 assembled for Sarah Palin’s tirade — were furious. They lashed out with fists, elbows, spittle and violent, obscene invective. The progressive forces took minor casualties but held their ground for two hours, blocking the stage view with their banners and signs, and blasting out working-class truth while constantly interrupting the right-wing’s program.

As noted by many local television reports, at one point the bigots’ emcee pleaded with the protesters to leave, claiming, “All we want to do is pray.” They never did pray, and he never got his wish, which was drowned out by unionists, women, youth, anti-war and immigrant rights voices demanding “Money for jobs, Not for war!”

The Pawlenty campaign had to resort to images from out of state because only resistance was visible in Boston. □

Imperialists escalate Libya war

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Actions by the U.S. government and NATO during late April indicate clearly that the ultimate objective of the war against Libya is regime change, leading to a full-scale military occupation of the North African state.

As the humanitarian crisis worsens in the areas around the contested port city of Misrata, the imperialist states and their allies are taking actions that will only escalate tensions and result in more civilians suffering and dying.

After announcing the deployment of CIA drones in the war against Libya, the Pentagon confirmed the first attack utilizing this dreaded, unpiloted weapon on April 23 near the capital of Tripoli.

Drones have been used for surveillance against the Libyan military for several weeks. The U.S. and NATO have been bombing Libya on a daily basis since March 19, causing many civilian deaths and damage to the infrastructure. In northwest Pakistan, deadly drone attacks have caused a political firestorm there in the recent period.

More attempts have also been made against the life of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi. An April 25 report from Tripoli in the New York Times said that NATO war planes had struck Gadhafi’s compound early that day and bombed a state television facility in an evident esca-

lation of the air campaign.

Libyan government officials say no one was killed in that bombing of the leader’s compound, but 45 people were injured, 15 of them seriously. Press accounts said there were no armaments in the area and that two bombs had hit the compound, propelling cement and debris at least 50 yards in all directions.

This attack is the third reported strike against the Libyan leader since the beginning of the bombings by the U.S. and NATO. Another one took place just two days earlier, on April 23. Libyan government officials say three people were killed that time.

Around the same time, Republican Sen. John McCain visited the rebel stronghold of Benghazi and made an appeal for the Obama administration to formally recognize the Transitional National Council (TNC), the name given to opposition forces collaborating with the U.S. and NATO to overthrow the Libyan government.

Britain, France and Italy, the former colonial powers in the region, are also sending military advisors to assist the rebel groups, in addition to operatives from the CIA, MI6, and British and Egyptian special forces, who have been inside the country at least since February, when the rebellion started in Benghazi.

One of the key allies in the imperialist war against Libya, the U.S.-backed government of Kuwait, is bankrolling the TNC to the tune of \$181 million, accord-

ing to TNC leader Mustafa Abdel Jalil. (Bloomberg, April 25)

The battle for Misrata

Despite claims by the TNC to have taken the western port city of Misrata, Libya’s third largest, fighting there appeared to have intensified from April 23 to April 25. Libyan Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Kaim said on April 23 that the government would allow local tribal leaders two days to see if they could persuade the rebels to lay down their arms. He explained, “The tactic of the army was to have a surgical strike but, with the NATO air strikes, that doesn’t work. The leaders of the tribes decided to do something to bring normal life back. Their main demand is that foreign fighters leave the town or surrender themselves to the army.” (Guardian, April 24)

The port at Misrata has been under the control of the rebels for several weeks, and local traditional leaders want to reopen the area.

Medical personnel at the Hikma hospital in Misrata said that at least 36 people had been killed in a 24-hour period. NATO planes have been flying over Misrata providing air cover for the rebels while they regulate sea traffic between Misrata and Benghazi along the Mediterranean.

Struggle for peace remains elusive

It is quite obvious that the rebels and their backers in the imperialist countries

do not want any negotiated settlement of the war without the total overthrow of the Libyan government. Several attempts at negotiation by Latin American states, the African Union and the Arab League have been rejected by the U.S. and the NATO countries involved.

A series of meetings between the African Union Commission chair, Jean Ping, and U.S. State Department officials on April 20-21 could not reach agreement on a ceasefire in Libya. The Obama administration is demanding that the Libyan government be replaced by the Western-backed TNC while the AU maintains that the people inside the country have the right to determine their own political future.

The AU since March 11 has called for noninterference by foreign military forces, the adoption of an immediate ceasefire, the protection of migrant workers from other parts of the continent and the swift distribution of humanitarian relief to the people in need of medical services, food, water and safe passage inside and outside the North African state.

Even though the U.S. and NATO have superior air power and cannot be effectively challenged militarily by the Libyan government in the skies over the country, the deployment of large-scale units of Western ground troops would serve as a rallying point for people all over Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Africa has a history of fighting protracted guerrilla and conventional wars against European colonial and settler-colonial regimes.

The war in Angola for the total liberation of southern Africa between 1975 and 1989 resulted in the defeat of the U.S.-backed South African Defense Forces under the racist apartheid regime. Liberation movements in other states such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, Guinea-Bissau, Algeria, Mozambique, South Africa and Somalia have defeated the military forces from various European capitals as well as the U.S.

Workers and oppressed people inside the U.S. are continuing to demand an end to all the wars and instead using the Pentagon budget to rebuild their cities, suburbs and rural areas in order to guarantee health care, quality education, public services and housing for all people. □

Freeze on Libya funds hurts Africa

From an article in Il Manifesto (Italy) by Manlio Dinucci, April 22.

Along with the oil and gas beckoning the imperialists in Libya are that country’s sovereign wealth funds — capital invested abroad. The Libyan Investment Authority, the Central Bank and other bodies manage more than \$150 billion on five continents.

Once the U.S. and the E.U. lifted the embargo in 2004 and the big oil companies returned, Libya maintained a yearly trade surplus of about \$30 billion, used largely for foreign investments. Before

launching a military attack on Libya, the U.S. froze the \$32 billion the LIA had deposited in U.S. banks and the E.U. froze around \$60 billion.

The assault on these Libyan funds can hurt all Africa, where the Libyan Arab African Investment Co. had invested in over 25 countries, 22 of them sub-Saharan. Libyan investment in an African communications satellite was allowing African countries to begin to become independent from the U.S. and European satellite networks, with an annual savings of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Were Libya able to continue increasing investments in three financial institutions launched by the African Union — the African Investment Bank, based in Tripoli; the African Monetary Fund, based in Yaoundé, Cameroon; the African Central Bank, based in Abuja, Nigeria — this would enable African countries to escape the control of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and would mark the end of the CFA franc, the currency that 14 former French colonies are forced to use. Freezing Libyan funds deals a strong blow to the entire project. □

EGYPT

Workers bring Tahrir Square to shop floor

By **G. Dunkel**

Egyptian workers are taking Tahrir Square to the shop floor. Since 2004 more than 1.7 million of them have held more than 3,000 strikes, job actions and other forms of protest. (Joel Beinin, “The Struggle for Workers’ Rights”) The removal of Hosni Mubarak in a mass, popular uprising involving all segments of Egyptian society has given workers an opening to take their particular economic, political and social demands to the shop floor and push for major changes.

Changes are coming rapidly in the structure of the labor union movement. Hussein Megawer, the head of the officially recognized General Trade Union Federation, has been jailed for 15 days under the same provisions regarding investigating crimes that prosecutors used against Mubarak’s sons. (Center for Trade Union and Workers Services, CTUWS news report)

The Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions has quickly asserted itself, condemning the military government’s proposal to outlaw strikes as “a betrayal of the revolution.” The EFITU

has called for a massive May Day protest in Tahrir Square. The EFITU is growing rapidly, as seen by the decision of 60,000 transportation workers to affiliate with the federation.

Some 4,000 workers in Mahalla, a center of the textile industry and workers’ struggles since the 1930s, went on strike to protest the way the government is distorting the textile industry. At a very famous strike at the Misr Spinning and Weaving Co. in Mahalla in 2006, a group of women workers walked off their posts and marched through sections of the plant where mostly men were working, chanting “Here are the women! Where are the men?” The men quickly joined the women to shut the plant down. The women strikers also put a lot of emphasis on organizing solidarity in the community. (Al Jazeera, April 11)

In the last two decades of Mubarak’s rule big changes were made to the Egyptian economy. Many state-owned companies were turned over to foreign owners or politically connected entrepreneurs who made extraordinary profits by cutting salaries and benefits, affecting wom-

en workers the most.

There are still problems. Women who attempted to hold a demonstration in Tahrir Square on International Women’s Day were brutally attacked by government thugs. The police and army did not protect them, and the movement didn’t organize an effective people’s guard.

Need to overcome divisions, strive for unity

A good example of the complexities facing Egyptian workers can be seen in Qena, a southern governorate (province) where for more than a week thousands have protested the appointment of a new governor, Emad Shehata Mikhael. Mikhael is a Copt, a Christian minority that makes up from 5 percent to 15 percent of Egypt’s population, but is a substantial portion of the people in Qena. He has spent his whole career as a police officer in Mubarak’s repressive apparatus.

In the first days of protests Copts and Muslims both came out. But more recently groups have appeared with banners citing Mikhael as “an enemy of God.” However, according to the English-language Daily News of April 22, “Protesters vowed

to form neighborhood watch groups to protect churches during their upcoming Christian holidays and chanted ‘Muslims and Christians are one hand,’ refuting allegations that the protests were sectarian in nature.”

The Free Coalition of Railway Workers joined the protests and cut off rail service in Qena.

Earlier in March, more than 6,000 teachers went on strike to demand permanent jobs, not three-year appointments. (CTUWS, March 1) Teachers in Egypt face class sizes of 90 students and get paid \$20 a month to start.

Another problem is the return of 2 million workers from Libya. Their remittances are going to be sorely missed because they had earned much more in Libya than in Egypt. The Egyptian bourgeoisie is going to try to turn these repatriated workers into a reserve army of unemployed to drive down wages and benefits.

Workers in Egypt are fighting to build their own organizations and overcome the divisions they have inherited from their past oppression. They are indeed building unity and solidarity. □

Profundo impacto en mujeres y afroamericanos Gobierno admite gran salto en la pobreza

Por **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

La tasa oficial de pobreza en EE.UU. ahora es del 15 por ciento, que significa 44 millones de personas o una de cada siete. Este es el mayor número registrado de personas en la pobreza. A pesar de las afirmaciones de que la recesión en EE.UU. terminó hace 16 meses (septiembre 2010), los hallazgos de la Oficina del Censo muestran que toda la clase trabajadora ha sido profundamente afectada por la pérdida de puestos de trabajo, pensiones, salud y vivienda. Entre los segmentos más oprimidos de la población estadounidense, las mujeres y las personas de color quienes constituyen una colonia interna, la situación es mucho peor.

El Wall Street Journal reporta: “La recesión más larga después de la 2da guerra mundial ahora tiene una fecha de terminación”. “La Oficina Nacional de investigación económica anunció el lunes que la recesión que comenzó en diciembre de 2007 fue más larga que las recesiones de 1973-1975 y 1981-1982”. (20 de sept.)

Los datos muestran que muchas mujeres más han sido lanzadas a la pobreza en los últimos años, lo que refuerza los patrones existentes de opresión, explotación y desigualdad. El Centro Nacional Jurídico de la Mujer (NWLC) informó el 16 de septiembre que “la tasa de pobreza de las mujeres aumentó 13,9 por ciento el año pasado, la tasa más alta en 15 años”. (www.nwlc.org)

Aunque las mujeres y las personas de color han alcanzado enormes progresos en la lucha y ganando concesiones relacionadas con los derechos civiles y oportunidades de empleo, las exigencias sociales del capitalismo de EE.UU. seguirán basándose en la súper explotación de los/as trabajadores/as más oprimidos.

El NWLC afirma que, “las tasas de pobreza fueron considerablemente mayores para las mujeres de color, llegando a una de cada cuatro mujeres afroamericanas (24,6 por ciento en comparación con el 23,3 por ciento en 2008). Las mujeres hispanas experimentaron un aumento similar, yendo del 22,3 por ciento en 2008 al 23,8 por ciento el año pasado”. Casi cuatro de cada diez madres solteras (38,5 por ciento) vivían en la pobreza en 2009, un au-

mento del 37,2 por ciento en 2008. En 2009, 15,4 millones de niños/as vivían en la pobreza, lo que representa un aumento de 1,4 millones en un año.

Las mujeres entre las edades de 15 a 44 años experimentaron una extensa pérdida de empleos lo cual resultó en la terminación de sus beneficios de salud. El Instituto Guttmacher analizó los datos del censo relacionados con seguros privados y encontró que 2,3 millones de mujeres en este grupo perdieron su cobertura médica entre 2008 y 2009, forzando a muchas a recibir Medicaid, pero incrementándose el número de aquellas sin seguros de salud en 1,3 millones. (www.guttmacher.org, 17 de sept.)

El Women’s Health News Digest dice que “También encontramos que los proveedores de planificación familiar que reciben fondos públicos tenían dificultad para cumplir con la necesidad creciente de cuidados contraceptivos subvencionados, a la vez que tenían que trabajar con menos recursos.” (HealthNews-Digest.com, 17 de sept.)

Para los/as trabajadores/as afro-americanos/as, quienes tienen el desempleo más alto en EE.UU., la tasa de pobreza es dos veces más que la de la población general. Reportó el Washington Informer que “En 2009 la tasa de pobreza de afro-americanos/as alcanzó el 25,8 por ciento”. (18 de sept.)

Cualquier esfuerzo serio de resolver la crisis económica en EE.UU. debe prestar atención especial a la situación de los/as afro-americanos/as, los/as latinos/as y las mujeres. El rechazo de la administración de Obama de reconocer el impacto desigual de la crisis económica en las mujeres y las nacionalidades oprimidas, destina al fracaso sus políticas actuales.

Si la opresión especial de las mujeres y la gente de color no es considerada, no será posible construir un movimiento de lucha que pueda efectivamente enfrentarse al sistema capitalista.

La opresión y la explotación basadas en la raza y en el género deben ser extirpadas para poder construir una sociedad libre de discriminación institucional. La igualdad entre el pueblo trabajador solamente puede ser lograda destruyendo toda forma de desigualdad basada en el género y la nacionalidad. □

Editorial de
MUNDO OBRERO

¡Viva el Primero de Mayo!

El Partido Workers World/ Mundo Obrero aplaude los acontecimientos recientes que realizan la unidad de la clase obrera en la lucha por los derechos de inmigrantes y trabajadores/as.

El Primero de Mayo se origina en los Estados Unidos. Salió de la lucha de los/as inmigrantes y otros/as trabajadores/as que lucharon y murieron en 1886 por la jornada laboral de ocho horas. Por 125 años, los/as trabajadores/as de todo el mundo han honrado el Día Internacional de los/as Trabajadores/as el 1º de mayo de cada año marchando para exigir sus derechos. Sin embargo, las fuerzas corporativas y gubernamentales de los Estados Unidos cooperaron para opacar este día de solidaridad internacional de los/as trabajadores/as creando una fiesta del “día del trabajo” en septiembre.

El Primero de Mayo, festivo de los/as trabajadores/as, creado por los/as trabajadores/as, fue revivido en Estados Unidos en el 2005 con una marcha en la ciudad de Nueva York organizada por el Movimiento Marcha de un Millón de Trabajadores. Un año más tarde, cuando aumentó sobremanera la represión contra los/as inmigrantes, millones salieron a las calles en Estados Unidos el 1º de Mayo para exigir la legalización y los derechos para todos/as los/as trabajadores/as.

Este año, el aumento de los ataques contra trabajadores/as inmigrantes y no inmigrantes, muestra la necesidad de una acción lo más unida y militante posible el Primero de Mayo en los Estados Unidos. El intento de repetir la legislación antisindical de Wisconsin y la legislación anti-inmigrante de Arizona ya está ocurriendo en ciudades y estados por todo el país. Al cesar puestos de trabajo y se aprueban presupuestos de austeridad que reducen los servicios sociales — durante una “recuper-

ación” económica para los patronos, la única opción que tienen los/as trabajadores/as es luchar. Y para tener éxito, deben estar unidos/as en sus luchas.

Un paso trascendental en la dirección correcta es la decisión de celebrar un mitin unido el Primero de Mayo en Nueva York. El año pasado se celebraron dos manifestaciones, una concentración grande, multinacional, en la plaza Union Square, organizada por la Coalición 1º de Mayo pro derechos de los/as trabajadores/as e inmigrantes, que incluye a inmigrantes, sindicalistas, jóvenes y estudiantes, miembros de la comunidad, etc.; y otra manifestación separada con enfoque sindical en una ubicación distinta. Frente a la urgencia y la necesidad de unidad, este año las fuerzas sindicales han acordado celebrar un mitin conjunto el 1º de mayo.

La unidad que se está forjando en Nueva York ayudará a recordar a todos/as los/as trabajadores/as que, como el viejo lema dice, “un ataque contra uno/a es un ataque contra todos/as”. Los ataques contra los/as inmigrantes (como los ataques contra las mujeres, afroamericanos/as, personas lesbianas, gays, bi y trans y las personas con discapacidad) son ataques contra toda la clase trabajadora en su conjunto. Los ataques contra los sindicatos son ataques contra los/as inmigrantes. Las guerras en el exterior intensifican la guerra contra los/as trabajadores/as aquí y viceversa. La solidaridad es la clave en la lucha contra los patronos y para conseguir la victoria.

¡Viva el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores y las Trabajadoras! □

El Primero de Mayo exijamos solidaridad

Continúa de página MO1
una señal de stop o conducir con una luz trasera rota”. Muchas de estas personas son inocentes. “Pero”, escribió Lawrence, “de igual forma están siendo detenidas y procesadas para su deportación”.

El programa comenzó en Carolina del Norte y Texas en Octubre de 2008. Ahora, cerca de 500 jurisdicciones en por lo menos 25 estados están trabajando con el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional para implementar el programa. Lawrence señaló que esto son seis veces el número de jurisdicciones que trabajan bajo la legislación anterior 287 (g), que autoriza a la policía local para actuar como Agentes de Aduanas.

Para colmo de males, el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional había informado a los funcionarios del gobierno estatal que podían optar o no por “Comunidades Seguras”. Esto resultó ser falso.

A mediados de abril, la congresista Zoe Lofgren de California pidió una investigación de los funcionarios federales de inmigración que ella dijo mintieron acerca de si los estados o condados tienen derecho a optar por “Comunidades Seguras”. Quienes se oponen al programa dicen que este engaño probablemente impidió a los funcionarios que no querían apoyar el

programa, presentar demandas a tiempo para impedir su colaboración.

Según un comentario de Bob King en el Houston Chronicle, cuesta alrededor de \$23.500 por persona el deportar a un/a trabajador/a. Imagínese si ese dinero se utiliza para las necesidades humanas en lugar de la represión.

Empleos, legalización y cuidado de la salud para todos/as daría lugar a verdaderas Comunidades Seguras.

Obama se reúne en materia de inmigración

El 19 de abril el presidente Obama se reunió con varios funcionarios electos, así como con líderes comunitarios y sindicales. La reunión era sobre revivir el debate nacional sobre la “reforma migratoria integral”.

Los participantes incluían al alcalde de Nueva York, Michael Bloomberg, al presidente de la AFL-CIO, Richard Trumka y al reverendo Al Sharpton de la Red Nacional de Acción. La Casa Blanca anunció que el gobierno de Obama había retomado el tema de la reforma migratoria integral.

La convocatoria para la reforma integral de inmigración (CIR por las siglas en inglés) ha sido abandonada por muchos defensores de los inmigrantes puesto que gran parte de la legislación dentro y fuera del Congreso bajo el título de CIR haría

todo lo contrario de lo que el movimiento progresista exige. Es por esto que también las fuerzas de derecha y anti inmigrantes también han pedido la CIR.

La CIR suele incluir programas de trabajadores huéspedes y los sistemas biométricos de identificación que le haría daño a todos/as los trabajadores/as, no legalizan a casi ningún trabajador.

Lo que gran parte del movimiento pro-inmigrante sigue exigiendo es la legalización inmediata y efectiva para todos/as, y no se detendrá hasta que la legalización se gane. Esta ala del movimiento condena cualquier programa de trabajadores invitados y los considera como una bofetada, no sólo contra trabajadores/as extranjeros/as que son traídos/as aquí con poco o ningún derecho, muchos/as en condiciones abusivas y de esclavitud, sino también contra los sindicatos. Trabajadores huéspedes se han utilizado en el pasado para romper campañas sindicales.

Trumka hablará en una manifestación el Primero de Mayo en Milwaukee, organizada por ‘Voces de la Frontera’ y otros. Este es un gesto importante de solidaridad.

Trumka representaría bien a los inmigrantes, especialmente a los indocumentados/as, si asegurara que la legalización esté en el centro de cualquier discusión

con el presidente Obama.

Por otra parte, una moratoria de las deportaciones debía haberse hecho hace mucho tiempo.

Las manifestaciones del Primero de Mayo del 2011 en todo el país deben enviar un claro mensaje de lucha independiente.

Las manifestaciones del Primero de Mayo deben decir a todos/as los/as involucrados/as en el debate sobre inmigración, a los jefes que quieren imponer la carga de la crisis económica sobre las espaldas de los trabajadores/as, a los agentes del ICE que llevan a cabo viciosos ataques racistas en las comunidades de inmigrantes, a toda el ala derecha que está llevando a cabo esta cacería de brujas de la clase obrera: ¡Detengan la guerra contra la clase obrera!

Wisconsin mostró el camino. Ahora debemos ir más lejos.

Sólo será suficiente el que terminen todos los ataques contra los trabajadores/as, — ya sean profesores o estudiantes, lavavajillas o enfermeras o trabajadores del automóvil o mineros.

Hasta que esta guerra no termine, tenemos que seguir no sólo marchando y manifestándonos, sino reviviendo el espíritu militante de la lucha de Haymarket por las 8 horas de trabajo, que fue lo que dio origen al Primero de Mayo. □

Latinoamérica y Estados Unidos: ALBA vs TLC

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

En Latinoamérica y el Caribe se están formando dos grupos de países, dependiendo del tipo de relación que se tenga con Estados Unidos. A un lado están los países dentro de la esfera de influencia estadounidense y al otro, los países que en diferentes grados, avanzan hacia la soberanía nacional, el desarrollo en beneficio de sus pueblos y la integración latinoamericana.

ALBA, esperanza de los pueblos

El máximo exponente de éstos últimos, son los países agrupados en la Alianza Bolivariana para los pueblos de nuestra América, ALBA. Encabezados por la generosa y revolucionaria Cuba, perseverante frente al criminal bloqueo EE.UU, le sigue la bolivariana Venezuela. En total son ocho integrantes, además de otros en calidad de aliados. Antigua y Barbuda, Bolivia, Dominica, Ecuador, Nicaragua y San Vicente y las Granadinas se suman a Cuba y Venezuela para dar un ejemplo de humanidad al resto del mundo.

La ALBA no es un simple tratado de comercio, sino un verdadero esfuerzo de integración con solidaridad, levantándose todos los pueblos unidos, ayudándose mutuamente. Es un asomo de lo que sería un mundo socialista, donde las relaciones entre los países son para el beneficio de sus pueblos y no para unos pocos ricos y sus corporaciones transnacionales. Los países del ALBA han adelantado ya en

cuestión del desarrollo de su infraestructura, en reducir el analfabetismo, en mejorar la educación y los servicios de salud, entre muchas otras cosas.

Pero también, los países del ALBA que cuentan con gran desarrollo médico y educativo como Cuba, y con recursos energéticos como Venezuela, extienden la ayuda no solo hacia los otros países miembros, sino a los más necesitados en todo el mundo. Un gran ejemplo es la ayuda de Cuba y Venezuela hacia la sufrida Haití. Equipos de médicos de Cuba ya asistían al pueblo haitiano desde mucho antes de que azotara el terremoto del 2010.

TLC, intervención imperialista

El contraste de la relación entre los países del ALBA con los países bajo la influencia de EE.UU. y sus tratados comerciales es inmenso. La naturaleza de los tratados de “libre” comercio, los TLC, promovidos por el imperio estadounidense, es importante tenerla muy clara. Primeramente, hay que destacar la desigualdad en el desarrollo. Estados Unidos, el país de más poderío militar y económico, inmensamente desarrollado, trata de imponer tratados comerciales a países en vía de desarrollo, sin poder militar, para robar los recursos materiales y la mano de obra barata. Imponiéndoles además condiciones que ahogan la posibilidad de un verdadero desarrollo económico, llevándolos a la miseria. Es una forma de subyugarlos.

Basta recordar el terrible caso del TLCAN ó NAFTA en México que tuvo efectos extremadamente nocivos para su economía, dejando arruinados a miles de pequeños agricultores, estrangulando la producción del maíz mexicano al sustituirlo por el maíz transgénico, producto de EE.UU. fuertemente subvencionado. En vez de abrir fuentes de trabajo, el TLC ha hundido a México en una dependencia económica y ahora también militar, con EE.UU. que en nada ha beneficiado a sus pueblos.

Miles de campesinos/as mexicanos/as se vieron forzados/as a cruzar el Río Grande, arriesgando sus vidas y muchos/as murieron, y siguen muriendo en el intento por llegar a EE.UU. para poder sobrevivir la penuria.

Como en los otros países de la región aliados de EE.UU., principalmente Colombia, Perú, Panamá y Costa Rica, la administración del gobernante de México, Felipe Calderón, está rodeada de corrupción y violencia contra su pueblo. Ni se diga de su llegada al poder, robado del legítimo presidente de ese país, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, AMLO.

Es interesante destacar que además de la cuestión comercial, en algunos de estos países, EE.UU. instala bases militares y/o envía tropas estadounidenses como es el caso con Colombia, Panamá y Costa Rica.

Aunque los TLC han sido rechazados por los pueblos de América Latina, incluyendo los países en la esfera es-

tadounidense, EE.UU. quiere volverlos a imponer. Un ejemplo es el de Colombia, país donde los derechos humanos son violentados cada día y donde más sindicalistas mueren a manos de la violencia paramilitar-estatal; 52 fueron asesinados en el 2010. El congreso de EE.UU. había rechazado aprobar el TLC por la constante violación a los DDHH, sin embargo ahora la administración de Barack Obama, con la excusa de que hay un nuevo gobernante en Colombia, está tratando de aprobar el funesto tratado.

Los pueblos responden

Pero ya el movimiento sindical colombiano ha respondido rechazando la imposición del tratado. Igual ha pasado en Costa Rica donde una masiva manifestación dio un rotundo NO al tratado EE.UU.-Costa Rica. En Panamá también se siente la oposición al de EE.UU.-Panamá.

En México, la lucha del pueblo se siente a flor de piel. Las organizaciones sociales y sindicales están muy activas. Un ejemplo es el Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas, vanguardia de la clase trabajadora, que lucha no solo por recuperar los puestos de trabajo cruelmente destruidos sin previo aviso por Calderón, sino que tratan de construir un frente de lucha en pro de todo el pueblo mexicano.

Muchos de estos movimientos tienen al ALBA en su mira, esa meta de justicia y equidad para todas y todos, es ahí hacia donde van dirigidos.

Resistencia hondureña organiza huelga general

Por Heather Cottin

Todos los sectores de la sociedad hondureña están en resistencia. Desde que se celebró en Tegucigalpa a finales de febrero la Asamblea Nacional del Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular, una huelga magisterial de 30 días, una manifestación masiva de la comunidad garífuna (negra), una huelga general de un día, y varias movilizaciones indígenas y campesinas, han demostrado que Honduras se encuentra en una encrucijada.

Una “Asamblea Intermedia” de 150 delegados/as, escogidos/as entre los 1,500 delegados/as a la Asamblea Nacio-

nal, apoyó estas luchas. Esta Asamblea decidió garantizar que la Comisión Ejecutiva Nacional, líder del FNRP, tendría una representación equitativa de mujeres y hombres, incluyendo a representantes indígenas, garífunas y de las comunidades LGBT.

Lucy Pagoada, una hondureña que reside en Estados Unidos participante de la Asamblea Intermedia, dijo a Workers World/Mundo Obrero, “Esta decisión fue un momento revolucionario. Hemos creado un nuevo sistema, y las personas seleccionadas eran verdaderos líderes”.

El 26 de marzo, la policía de Tegucigalpa golpeó a la líder de la resistencia garí-

funa Miriam Miranda, de la organización Ofranehon. Ese día miles de personas se fueron a las calles para conmemorar los 214 años desde que el pueblo esclavizado en San Vicente huyó para refugiarse en Honduras. Miranda salió del hospital el 1 de abril para liderar la conmemoración garífuna.

Los/as 150 delegados/as de la Asamblea Intermedia eligieron a Miranda para la nueva Comisión Ejecutiva Nacional.

La Asamblea también dio un apoyo abrumador a los/as asediados/as docentes hondureños/as que enfrentan una nueva ley antisindical. Los/as maestros de Honduras han estado en huelga durante un mes, exigiendo seis meses de salarios retroactivos. Los/as maestros/as han sido “la columna vertebral de la resistencia”, dijo Pagoada, quien también es maestra en Nueva York.

“Todo el país se está movilizand contra esta ley que pretende privatizar el sistema educativo. Los padres y los estudiantes están ocupando las escuelas”, dijo Pagoada. Los/as maestros enfrentan una represión brutal. La Asamblea Intermedia convocó una huelga general para el 30 de marzo, que fue exitosa en todos los municipios. El Gobierno de Lobo reaccionó enviando la policía hondureña para atacar a los/as maestros/as, estudiantes, trabajadores/as, agricultores/as y organizaciones que exigían mejor educación, un aumento del salario mínimo y protestaban contra el aumento en el precio del combustible. (NPR, 1 de abril) La resistencia tuvo otro paro el 12 de abril.

La Asamblea Intermedia también está trabajando en la “constituyente”, un concepto de la “refundación” de todo el país.



MO FOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Lucy Pagoada en Harlem, Nueva York, junio 2010

La “constituyente” era el plan en el que Manuel Zelaya estaba trabajando para reescribir la represiva Constitución de 1982, cuando fue derrocado por el golpe de estado militar en junio de 2009.

La Constitución de 1982 mantiene el poder de los dueños de los latifundios, las enormes granjas que pertenecían a las tierras de los pueblos indígenas. Las organizaciones campesinas están especialmente preocupadas y piden la Reforma Agraria.

“Este es el significado de ‘refundación’. Los/as campesinos están poniendo sus vidas en esto. Las personas sienten que tienen el derecho a la tierra. La refundación significa que todo tiene que ser nuevo. Queremos una sociedad diferente, y el poder debe venir desde abajo”, dijo Pagoada. □



MO FOTO: BRENDA RYAN

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EL PRIMERO DE MAYO EXIJAMOS SOLIDARIDAD

Defender derechos de obreros/as y detener las deportaciones

Por Teresa Gutiérrez

Más de 1 millón de inmigrantes han sido deportados/as desde que el presidente Barack Obama asumió el cargo. ¡Un millón! Esto es un tsunami de injusticia.

Esta deportación masiva de inmigrantes se produce en medio de una ola de legislaciones anti-inmigrante en el país. Muchas de esas leyes ya se han aprobado en las legislaturas estatales, como en Georgia. Muchas más están pendientes, como en Florida, haciendo de esta la hora final de su programa “muéstrame tus papeles” en EE.UU.

Pero en cualquier fase que estén estos proyectos de ley, la legislación ya ha logrado su objetivo de contribuir a un clima racista contra inmigrante. Esta cacería de brujas está calculada para infundir temor en las comunidades de inmigrantes, llevar a los trabajadores/as al clandestinaje, o más, a su auto-expulsión, y para evitar que los/as inmigrantes se organicen para defender sus derechos.

Además, el clima anti-inmigrante tiene la intención de romper la solidaridad entre los/as trabajadores/as nacidos/as en este país y los/as trabajadores/as nacidos/as en otros lugares.

Estos ataques se producen en el contexto de una profundización de la crisis económica. ¿Cuál es la posición de la patronal empresarial y sus representantes en el gobierno, en la búsqueda de una solución a la crisis que ellos mismos crearon? Atacar a los maestros/as, robar las pensiones de los trabajadores/as, aumentar los despidos y ejecuciones hipotecarias, y sabotear los sindicatos, incluyendo el derecho fundamental a la negociación colectiva.

Para llevar a cabo este programa, los empresarios deben fomentar las divisiones entre la clase obrera. El sistema capitalista cuenta con paz social mientras des-



MO FOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

En el 2005 en Nueva York, el Primero de Mayo se recobró este día tan esencial para la lucha obrera.

mantela los derechos del/la trabajador/a a un puesto de trabajo, salud, educación, etc. Sólo la solidaridad y un espíritu de lucha pueden detener su programa.

Este Primero de Mayo del 2011 es más importante que nunca. El Primero de Mayo nació como un día de lucha justa y militancia revolucionaria, y este espíritu debe ser reactivado de nuevo en EE.UU.

Solidaridad. Unidad militante para luchar y resistir. Estas son las únicas cosas que detendrán las deportaciones, así como todos los ataques contra trabajadores/as y oprimidos/as. Sólo con la reactivación de la lucha de clases, no solamente podemos defender los logros pasados, sino también ganar nuevas victorias.

Detrás del 1.000.000 de deportaciones está una política federal que fue iniciada por el gobierno de Obama en el 2008 llamada “Comunidades Seguras”.

En un artículo publicado en Counterpunch el verano pasado, Stewart Lawrence comentó que las “Comunidades Seguras” de Obama podrían ser más peligrosas que las leyes que emanan de Arizona.

Medio año después los hechos demuestran que es cierto.

“Comunidades Seguras” se vendió al público como un programa dirigido a deportar presuntos delincuentes que no tuvieran documentos.

Sin embargo, el hecho de que un millón de trabajadores/as hayan sido deportados/as, muchos de ellos/as bajo la política de “Comunidades Seguras”, demuestra que este programa tiene por objeto reunir a los indocumentados/as bajo cualquier pretexto, exigiéndoles documentos para comprobar el estatus legal migratorio y luego consignar los/as que no tienen estos documentos para el proceso de deportación.

Expertos legales y activistas de derechos humanos y de inmigración, han denunciado esta discriminación racial como extrema. Sólo se detuvo y se les pidió documentos a las personas de color.

Activistas de Chicago señalan un caso de un inmigrante que fue detenido por un policía que alegó que tenía a la Virgen María colgando de una cadena en su coche bloqueando la visión del conductor. (Medill News Service, Northwestern University)

El millón de personas que han sido deportadas no son delincuentes. Son trabajadores/as que se vieron obligados/as a venir a este país porque Estados Unidos orquestó las políticas económicas y políticas como el TLCAN o el secuestro del Presidente Jean-Bertrand Aristide de Haití.

A menudo, lo que la policía utiliza para justificar la detención de trabajadores/as son cosas que la gente hace simplemente para sobrevivir. Por ejemplo, una mujer de Nueva York fue detenida, y finalmente deportada, por vender CDs, supuestamente ilegal.

Incluso ese pequeño grupo de trabajadores/as que pudo haber cometido un grave acto anti-social debe ser defendido. De lo contrario, el movimiento se alineará con los intentos de la clase dominante para dividir entre trabajadores “buenos” y trabajadores “malos”, mientras que los verdaderos criminales bombardean a Libia o ejecutan hipotecas de viviendas.

El movimiento no puede unirse a la actitud de dividir y conquistar de la clase dominante que quiere que el movimiento tome partido y esté de acuerdo con deportar a “esos malos inmigrantes y no a estos”.

Stewart Lawrence señaló que el objetivo de “Comunidades Seguras” son delincuentes de delitos menores, incluidas las personas que pueden ser culpables de llevarse

Continúa a página MO-4

SALUDOS DE WORKERS WORLD/MUNDO OBRERO

Nos complace presentar la primera edición ampliada en español de Mundo Obrero. Es importante que haya sido este Primero de Mayo, fecha tan significativa para la clase obrera mundial sobre todo en este tiempo cuando se vive una crisis no solo económica y financiera, sino del mismo sistema capitalista. Crisis creada por las corporaciones e instituciones financieras estadounidenses que ha tenido una repercusión mundial. Aquí mismo en Estados Unidos, “en las entrañas del monstruo” como lo llamaba José Martí, las contradicciones se ven más agudamente; donde las riquezas creadas por la clase trabajadora van a parar solo al 1% de la población, creándose así la mayor inequidad desde los años 1920. Los ricos más ricos, y los pobres, más pobres.

A la par, hay un intento de fortalecer la extrema derecha en este país. Los sindicatos y los/as inmigrantes, la clase trabajadora en general está bajo ataque. Esto demostrado por un aumento del racismo, desalojos, privatización del cuidado de salud y la educación, despidos masivos y toda una gama de propuestas

de ley diseñadas en contra del pueblo pobre y trabajador.

Ante todos estos ataques no hay otra solución que la de luchar. Los partidos de los ricos, tanto el Demócrata como el Republicano y el nuevo Partido del Té son los que representan a quienes crearon la crisis actual, sus intereses no son los de beneficiar al pueblo pobre ni a la llamada “clase media”. Representan a los bancos y a las grandes corporaciones que quieren destruir los beneficios ganados a fuerza de sangre y sudor: negociación colectiva de los sindicatos, seguridad social, beneficios de jubilación, etc.

Pero para luchar efectivamente hay que tener claro cuál es verdaderamente el problema y cómo solucionarlo, ¿pero cómo se consigue esa claridad ideológica? No se aprende en las escuelas, ni en las universidades. Ese es precisamente el objetivo principal de nuestro periódico WW/MO. Aclarar, enseñar y a la vez también mostrar las luchas que se llevan a cabo nacional e internacionalmente las cuales los grandes medios tratan de ocultar. Pero no es solo un ejercicio de palabras, es el órgano de

un partido, uno militante comprometido con las luchas que benefician a nuestra clase trabajadora, contra el racismo, el sexismo, la homofobia, la falta de empleos. Comprometido también con las luchas de liberación nacional y antiimperialistas. Luchamos por cambiar esta sociedad basada en ganancias para unos pocos, en una sociedad verdaderamente libre donde la clase trabajadora, los/as más pobres y oprimidos/as, los/as excluidos/as, sean por fin dueños/as y forjadores/as de su futuro para que podamos vivir obteniendo todo lo necesario para una vida digna: trabajos con sueldos sustentables, educación y servicios de salud de calidad y gratuitos, viviendas a precios asequibles. Para que al fin la clase trabajadora pueda disfrutar de los beneficios que ella misma crea.

Les invitamos a que nos conozcan, ya sea por Internet, por teléfono, visitando nuestras oficinas, o escribiéndonos. Únanse a nuestro partido para aumentar la capacidad de luchar por y para todos/as. En una lucha unitaria, pues somos todos/as hermanos/as en la lucha: inmigrantes con o sin papeles, el resto de la

clase trabajadora, todas las razas, sexos y orientaciones sexuales, personas de todas las edades. Es tiempo de reflexión y análisis pero sobre todo tiempo de lucha. Para ser efectivos/as y vencer, tenemos que hacer como dijo el gran luchador ruso, protagonista de la primera revolución socialista en el siglo XX, Vladimir Illich Lenin: “No hay práctica sin teoría ni teoría sin práctica”.

No podemos darnos el lujo en estos tiempos de lanzar golpes al aire. Tienen que estar por necesidad dirigidos contra el objetivo y para eso tenemos que estudiar, como estudian los equipos ganadores de fútbol, los grandes boxeadores, todo/a atleta. Solo conociendo bien el método de lucha podremos vencer. No basta ser un/a activista individual. Tenemos que organizarnos en un colectivo que realmente pueda responder a los ataques contra nuestra clase, para una lucha efectiva, de clases y sobre todo, ¡por el socialismo! ¡Únanse a Workers World/Mundo Obrero!

Escribanos a WW-MundoObrero@workers.org.